

May 24, 2004

Letters to the Editor
Los Angeles Times
202 W. 1st Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

VIA FACSIMILE: 213-237-7679

Michael Hiltzik's column of May 24 accuses me of fabricating facts when I contended that roughly 7,500 illegal immigrants are receiving subsidized university educations while we are turning away a like number of qualified residents.

Most glaringly, Mr. Hiltzik reported that the Legislative Analyst's Office disavowed "any such numbers." In fact, Mr. Hiltzik was informed by the Legislative Analyst's Office last week that the numbers I cited were within the range of their estimates. Indeed, the statistics I used -- and the column itself -- were submitted to the LAO prior to publication to verify the accuracy of the numbers and the estimate was confirmed by that office. And Mr. Hiltzik knew it.

Letters to the Editor

May 24, 2004

Page 2

In my interview with Mr. Hiltzik, I also pointed out that the estimate of 7,500 students is quite consistent with an estimated cost of \$63.7 million used by Gov. Gray Davis when he vetoed the first bill extending the in-state tuition subsidy to illegal immigrants in 1999. At least one staff analysis written in 2001 also used this figure - citing proponents of the measure.

I appreciate that Mr. Hiltzik has a political point of view quite different from mine and I respect an honest debate over our differing policy positions and the data that supports them. But accusing me of fabricating statistics - while ignoring facts presented to him -- is unfair, untrue and unworthy of a professional journalist.

Sincerely,

Tom McClintock
State Senator, 19th District